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# HOWELL COBB PAPERS

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## LEVI K. BOWEN TO HOWELL COBB

Washington, [D. C.,] Jan. 3, 1861.<sup>1</sup>

My dear Sir:

We have not succeeded in bringing the Governor of our state<sup>2</sup> to his duty and he will not convene the Legislature. In a few days the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House will I think issue the call.

The Administration has today assumed a position which in my opinion will cut the Gordian knot and hastily attract all the Southern states in a common cause. The President is determined to retain Anderson at Fort Sumter and endeavor to collect the revenue. This will be likely to lead to blows and the Southern states, yet hesitating, will in consequence rally to action. But all the news I could give you will be anticipated before this could reach you.

Our state, as I have regarded from the first, is really the key to the whole movement of the South. If she could be got to move promptly, accept the fact as it exists, that the Union is really now dissolved, and declare herself out of it, and take the lead for a Southern Republic at once, this whole difficulty could be peaceably solved. The North would never wage war against a united South. But if the 4th. of March arrives and the North gets possession of this capital, and inaugurates Lincoln, only part of the South being out, you may rest assured the whole power of the Government will be used to subjugate the states which are out. Then we

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1. Erroneously dated 1860 in original.

2. Maryland

should and would join hands, but only after a war is commenced the end of which could not be foretold. The only way to avoid war, just as sure as God rules over us, is for the whole South to be joined in a new confederacy before the 4th. of March.

The great necessity in our state is just that which was required in our last election, bold leaders who would rally our people to the cause. The state could be put in the position it should occupy in 30 days, with far less labor and cost than carried it for Breckenridge. Our party is nearly a unit, many of the Bell party are with us, but as yet there is no daring spirit to lead us to the work.

You will ask why I do not move perhaps, and I am sorrowful to answer, that I do not and cannot. My whole heart and soul is with you as you know and a far more popular and easy task it would be to rouse up our people to the work than that I had to perform before the election. But I am forced now to listen to the call of duty put up by my family and abjuring all public affairs prepare for private business, because politics has impoverished me. In 1853 I was forced to sell my estate and home to meet reverses I suffered in consequence of my efforts for Mr. Buchanan in 1852. During the last four years as you know I have had to brave the work and bear the expenses mainly of all our contests in Md. and this leaves me in heavy debt. In consequence of my loss of hearing from a throat affection contracted in Pa. in 1856, I cannot pursue my profession and turning to some other calling I am looking to a location in New York in March. Could I have got settled an old claim against the P. O. Department which Black has pronounced sound and I expected, amounting to some \$31,000 I could remain in Md. but things are such now I have no home in that quarter. Indeed to be frank I am not sure who are my friends any more.

You will perhaps wonder and not care to relish all this selfish narration but I have made it because I could not suffer you to misunderstand my inaction. The entreaties of my family and sense of duty drive me from all public affairs.

To all your movements I bid God's speed. The south is only doing now what the irrevocable laws of nature and necessity compel her to do and what can be much better accomplished than when a fanatical and dictatorial majority shall have grown stronger and more arrogant.

A. G. MAGRATH TO HOWELL COBB.

Charleston, S. C., Jan. 18, 1861.

My dear Sir:

Your despatch has just been received. A letter of mine to Col. Orr which he will show, and the enclosure it contains, will show you our present position. The failure of a consignment in reaching us, made it necessary, with all convenient certainty, to be assured to what extent, we could be relieved, if a pressing occasion should arise. Hence the telegram to you. Thank you for your offer to assist us. We shall not diminish your stock unless something unexpected should suddenly occur. If it does not, in the course of a little time we will be relieved.

Your despatch of the adoption of the secession resolutions was highly gratifying. And the announcement you make of the passage of the ordinance tomorrow, creates for all, the source of earnest congratulation. The Southern states will owe you much for your counsel and aid in saving them from the fate which awaited them; and I have no doubt their sense will be evinced in a manner gratifying to you and honorable to them. Upon the outpost which this state for the present maintains, other interests beside hers, are also involved. I shall be glad therefore to hear and profit by your suggestions, whenever you have leisure to write, and this I beg you to receive, as communicated with great sincerity.

S. T. BAILEY TO HOWELL COBB

Macon, [Ga.,] 4 May, 1861.

Dear Sir:

Excuse me if I seem too forward in offering advice. My anxiety for the safety and success of our country is my only

apology. I fear the government does not realize that this is a war of *conquest* and not so much by the Lincoln government as the Northern masses and if their leaders were to even talk of peace they would be hurled from power. The trial of strength then between the two sections is inevitable. It is a *death struggle* depend upon it! and its length will very much depend upon the vigor with which we deal our first blows. We must lose *no first battles*; it will throw a damper upon our friends and add countless thousands to their foes, and years of blood and carnage to the war. They believe our subjugation not only practicable but easy. Let us stun them so by our first blows that they will early learn it will cost much more than they calculated, besides opening up to their view a prospect of some danger of an invasion of their homes.

Our excellent president Davis is not quite up to the mark. He should call for half a million soldiers and he could have them mustered in three weeks. But let our men be defeated or let them rot in camp while the enemy martials his hosts and tramples down our friends in Maryland and elsewhere and until the spring and summer pass away and the wet and inclement weather of fall and winter return, we shall be ruined, our people will be discouraged and the North will pour down her millions upon us, for then their farmers and laborers will be at leisure and will constitute an army of very different material from that composed of the *scum* of the cities as will be the case at first. For God's sake let us strike them effectually before they send that dangerous material against us! Let us convince them that there can be nothing made by fighting us. Washington City must be taken and the Vandals driven out of Maryland—that is part of our territory and it is disgraceful for the South to look on and see our friends there trampled under the feet of a vile host of Abolitionists and foreign vagabonds when if we would try we can protect them. We have not force enough at Norfolk. They are resolved to recapture that important point when their forces are concentrated cost what it may and with a skillful leader they can easily do it in spite of double the

force we have there. Our friends seem to forget that every one of their boasted Batteries can be turned by a large land force under a skillful leader and what is to hinder such a force being landed anywhere above or below? We ought also to remember that the fidelity of our colored population depends upon our success in effectually defending our soil. Let us falter or fail and our present security will be at an end. Northern abolition emissaries and spies are all over the South in advance of their invading army and throughout the South the Blacks are already informed of the object of that invasion. I know that whereof I affirm. Is anybody so blind as to feel sure that a vast majority of the slaves would not with avidity escape from bondage if they felt there was a power near to secure them that Boon? The Vandals must not on every account either keep or acquire a foothold in the South and to prevent it and keep the Carthaginians out of Italy we must carry the war into Africa. "Delenda est Washington" and northern forts beyond must be the Roman cry before Rome can hope for peace. . . . .

### HOWELL COBB<sup>1</sup> TO HIS WIFE

Camp Cobb, Richmond Va., Sept. 7, 1861.

My dear Wife:

This is my birthday and I cannot let it pass without communing with you by letter which is our only privilege at this time. It is a warm but bright day. God grant that it may be auspicious of the great future that lies before us. Since I last wrote to you I have had a busy and an anxious time. My new and varied duties have made my camp life a routine of constant labor and occupation. All of it is borne, I trust with Christian patience, until sickness and death throw their gloom over all around me. Like all the other regiments in Virginia we are passing through a trying ordeal. Already we have buried twelve of our men and I fear that before many hours we will be called to follow

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1. At the time Cobb was a Colonel in Command of the 16th Ga. Reg. of Inf.

others to their last resting place. All else I can meet and endure, but to see my men falling around me by the hand of disease, and I am powerless to protect them, it wrings my very heart. I try to lean upon the arm of Him alone who holds our destiny in His hand and in the sincerity of my heart I pray that He would stay the hand of the destroyer. Duty requires me to enforce discipline and often to do for the good of the men what they feel and believe is only an arbitrary exercise of power. How little do they know of what is going on in my mind and heart, when they indulge in such complaint. I visit them daily to cheer them up and often with a bleeding heart I smooth their foreheads with my hand, and with some gentle pleasantry try to drive away the despondency which the death of their comrades has brought upon them. But you know that at best I am but a poor comforter in a sick room and all that I can do adds but little to their relief. My chaplain, Mr. Flynn is a most excellent man and in his quiet and unobtrusive way, spends his hours in visiting and comforting our sick. . . . .

JOHN B. LAMAR TO HOWELL COBB.

Macon, Ga., Nov. 3, 1861.

Dear Gov[ernor]:

. . . . We make plenty of bread and meat for another year, and as our supplies of salt, bagging, rope, negro clothes, shoes, etc., were all laid in for cash last spring, at the ruling prices at that time, we can laugh at the blockade for a while if salt is \$12 per sack. (Ours cost \$1.25 which in 200 bushels I laid in makes the slight difference between \$250 and \$2400 and all the above named supplies in the same proportion).

But how it will be another year if the blockade is not raised makes me hold my breath when I think of it. I have some wool and next May's clip will add some to it, making in all probably 800 lbs. or more which will make about half our negro cloth. Shoes I can get at some price I expect. As to bagging, rope and twine, we can do without, by pack-

ing seed cotton away in pens and letting it lay until the English send us bagging. But salt we must have or starve. I suppose enough will be made on the long line of our coast during the year. . . . .

JOHN A. COBB TO HOWELL COBB.

Macon, Ga., Dec. 20th, 1862.

Dear Father:

I returned here last night from S. W. Ga. I never heard until last Wednesday of the death of Uncle Tom<sup>1</sup>. I was very sorry to hear it, it is a hard blow on our family more so on his wife and children. I don't know what they will do.

I went down to Sumter a few days after you left here. I got \$5019. and some cents from Sparks, proceeds of Hurricane<sup>2</sup> cotton and the balance from the sale of corn in Americus, and paid Jackson the first payment on the land \$6783.33 and give him two notes each for the same amount one and two years with interest from date if not punctually paid at maturity, and took his bond for titles. I asked him if he would deduct the interest if the notes were paid before due, but he could not tell as the notes belong to children and he is not their guardian, he said he would find out and let me know. I signed your name to the notes by me with which he is satisfied. Scrutchins has moved to Worth and our negroes have moved to Sumter. I went down and attended to the measuring of the corn, he had 4780 bushels. I gave him the same in Worth. We only had about five hundred bushels to sell in Worth. I had engaged 1000 and the agent held me to my contract and I have left orders for the other five hundred to be delivered at Americus, which will close up the corn business. There was about 30,000 lbs. of fodder. I have not had a settlement yet, but will have it in January. The fattening hogs will be driven up from Worth this week, which will be the

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1. Brigadier General T. R. R. Cobb was killed at Fredericksburg Dec. 13, 1862.

2. One of the Cobb plantations.



last thing we will have to move. There is one hundred and thirty stock hogs on the Scrutchins place, which is more than I expected, so we will not have many to take from the Barwick place to supply them.

They have killed hogs on the Barwick, McBride and Mount place, if Brantly has killed it was after I went to Worth they have had fine weather on their meat.

I saw Brantly's fattening hogs this last trip, they are the smallest he has ever had since I have been going to the places. I don't think they will average much over 150 lbs, he will have to keep them until late to make them go much over that. I think the old fellow is so much ashamed of the looks of his hogs compared with the others that he will do better next year. All the Sumter<sup>1</sup> negroes have been vaccinated and Dr. Barrow will vaccinate the Worth negroes tomorrow, The Bibb negroes were vaccinated before I left. I have not yet heard from Baldwin. I am going over there on Monday to send the negroes I am going to move to Sumter.<sup>2</sup> I will take two mules from the Hurricane. There will be five grown hands and some children in the lot that I will move. I am going to send them down in a wagon and make Henry go with them, drive six mules down leave two and let the four bring back the empty wagon. I send them this way on account of the smallpox; there is too much risk in sending them on the cars. All the negroes have returned from Savannah, no clothes has been given to them, and I don't know what I will do for Kerseys cannot be had now.

Some of them came back with the measles, which I am afraid will spread over all the places. I told all the overseers to give the negroes only three days Christmas and to keep them on the plantation.

Jenny has had a fine Cobb horse colt,—bay.

The corn that we sold in Athens I could not deliver, as the Railroad will not receive anything but government

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1. One of the Cobb plantations.

2. Sumter, Worth, Bibb and Baldwin are names of counties in which the Cobbs owned plantations.

freight. I will see Mr. Hull and the others when I go to Athens. I had made all my arrangements to have it delivered at once, but when the R. R. agent refused to receive it, I could do nothing, and as the time is nearly passed when we could haul it will be impossible to deliver it before next summer, unless they will pay for hauling. There is a man who wants to get a contract to haul our corn to Americus, but about that and other things I will tell you when I see you.

I will be in Athens next Wednesday, and remain during Christmas.

Col. Browne told me when here that Judge Jas. Jackson had been appointed military Judge for Ga. H. R. Jackson would be made Brigadier General soon and that Howell would be appointed cadet on his (Col. Bs) return to Richmond.

#### WILLIAM M. BROWNE TO HOWELL COBB

Richmond, Va., Jan. 21, 1863.

My dear General:

I have much pleasure in informing you that I have been entirely successful in negotiating your matters with the Sec. of War, and that too without any unnecessary delay. I hope that the arrangement will be satisfactory to you and that you will have full success. While you have the men allow me to advise you to be present in Ga., as much as possible and not leave the matter entirely to recruiting officers. Vast injury to the prompt execution of the Conscription law has been done by the indiscreet appeals for volunteers of recruiting officers who ask men to volunteer to escape the disgrace of conscription and thus aid in making the law odious. The law has almost failed in Ga., owing in a great measure to the utter imbecility of those appointed to administer it, and if we do not get the men by spring our position will be more than critical. There is no Ga. Regt. in the army of N. Va. that has upwards of 500 rank and file for duty and many have not half that number. Bad designing men in

Crawfordsville,<sup>1</sup> in Hancock Co., and elsewhere are doing all they can to bring Joe Brown into open rebellion; we therefore need the energy, sense and popularity of men like yourself to counteract their efforts and make the people act as Georgians ought to act in such a crisis. . . . .

JOHN A. COBB TO MRS. HOWELL COBB.

Macon, Ga., March 9th, 1863.

Dear Mother:

I arrived here last night from Sumter. I spent several days with father in Florida and left all well.<sup>2</sup>

I have delivered the meat to the Government at 35¢. I have not been paid yet. I could have got the money this morning, but as there is a prospect of getting the 50¢ I concluded to let the acct. stand open for a week, as the Agt. told me by that time he would be authorized to pay the 50¢ per pound. I delivered 23870 lbs. Father was perfectly satisfied with the price and did not think the Government ought to pay any more.

JENNY LAMAR<sup>3</sup> TO MRS. HOWELL COBB

Milledgeville, Ga., 1863.

My dear Missis:

I write to let you know I have not forgotten you and if you please mam send your old servant some sugar and coffee and give my love to all the children. I am so disable to come. I send these few lines by Warren. Please send wat you can spare by him to me and you will oblige me for I do love my coffee. Give my love to all my collord friends in the yard and receive the greates portions for yourself.

So farwell till I her from you, I remain your mammy.

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1. Sumter, Worth, Bibb and Baldwin are names of Georgia counties in which the Cobbs owned plantations.

2. General Cobb was then in command of a military district in Florida.

3. A slave of Mrs. Cobb's.

## HOWELL COBB TO JOHN A. COBB.

Quincy, Fla., March 25th, 1863.

My dear Son:

I received your letter by yesterday's mail. The sad intelligence it communicated had already reached me through the telegraph and letter of your Uncle William. It was a sudden shock and my heart sunk under the blow. I know that my dear boy is happy and his sainted spirit calls for no grief, yet it is hard to be reconciled to the idea that I shall see him no more in this world.<sup>1</sup> May God in his infinite Goodness, grant us all a happy family reunion in that happy home to which he has gone.

My great anxiety and distress now is about your mother. She is never out of my mind. Tom was the pride of her heart, as the youngest child always is the dearest to a mother's heart. She will be supported, I know full well, in her severe trial, by that true christian faith and piety, which has in her a bright orament, and a worthy example, my dear son, for all of us. Her life and conduct in my eye has been the most effective teaching to my own wayward heart. With all this, she will still suffer much, her health is not good, and this severe affliction is almost too much for her. She will require all the kindness and attention that her children can afford and I know that their kind hearts will readily respond. God will give relief to her aching heart and restore cheerfulness to her gloomy spirit, for it is not his will that we should go through life with a sorrowing shade over our pathway. I want to hear not only that she is well in health, but cheerful in spirit. . . . .

JAMES A. SEDDON<sup>2</sup> TO HOWELL COBB

Richmond Va., May 5th, 1863.

General:

. . . And now, my dear Sir, will you pardon me for directly

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1. The reference is to the death of Cobb's infant son Thomas R. R. Cobb.  
2. Confederate Secretary of War.

applying to you on a matter which I have felt to be of such delicacy, that I had requested our friend Hunter to intimate an inquiry on it, but which I understand a day or two since on the eve of his departure from the City he had omitted to do. You are aware that the late Congress required by law the two Q. M. Gen. to be a Brigadier General and it would be agreeable to the president, and most gratifying to me if you would consent to accept that position. In no spirit of false modesty, but with sincere feeling of your claims and capacity, as well as your past distinctions and reputation, I feel almost ashamed to ask you to accept any position less than the first in the Department, but I know your whole heart and mind are devoted to our great cause, and believe that you would consider the post of most usefulness that of greatest honor. A Quarter Master of high capacity, energy and administrative mind would be of invaluable service to the Government, and this may be said without any undue disparagement of Col. Myers who is a very good Bureau officer and a very pleasant official to deal with. With you however in this most important of all administrative branches of the Department, I should have a far fuller assurance of efficiency and success. Will you consider this matter, if deemed worthy of your thought, seriously and if unfavorably hold it as confidential, but if otherwise, let me know your determination at your earliest convenience. You will not I am sure, misunderstand this proposition as implying any disparagement of your high usefulness in the field, but only as evincing my estimate of your superior Civic qualifications for the most important duties, and my great anxiety to secure them in that Department of the Government, which while during the war it must be admitted to be the most important, is of course to me the essential and most important one.

I trust therefore, you will at least pardon my presumption in submitting the proposition to you.

## HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE.

Atlanta, Sept. 9th, 1863.

My dear Wife:

I reached here on yesterday and have been constantly engaged, so much so, that I have not seen Milly though Mr. Glenn called to say they had a room for me. I shall move to their house to-day. The court has been ordered to suspend their sessions and I had hoped to have gone to Athens in the morning, and then returned to my command in Florida, but I have just received a dispatch from Gen. Cooper at Richmond, ordering me to remain here and take command of the State Troops<sup>1</sup> raised by Gov. Brown. If the President had done his very best to place me in the most unpleasant position possible, he could not have succeeded better than by this order. I am placed under Gen. Bragg, and have to cooperate with Joe Brown about whom you know my opinions too well to repeat them. My duty requires me to submit without murmur or complaint, and I shall do it.

## JOS. E. JOHNSTON TO HOWELL COBB

Dalton, Ga., Feb. 2nd, 1864.

My dear General:

I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 25th of Jan. in due time, and I thank you for it cordially. It is not possible to misunderstand your motives.

I have repeatedly suggested to the President the course you refer to, without going into details, however. Thinking that as the plan of operations involved the use of other troops as well as mine, and a new base of operations, my proper course, after a general suggestion, was to wait for an invitation from the President to explain my plan and propose the transfer of the forces necessary to give us reasonable hope of success. I have repeated that sugges-

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1. Cobb was promoted to Major General on Sept. 9, 1863, and placed in Command 7th Georgia Nat. Troops.

tion several times, once since receiving your letter, but, apparently, without exciting my interest in his Excellency's mind.

I was surprised to learn that anybody is crazy enough to think of another invasion of the North. Should it be made it will ruin us. I fear, however that your Richmond correspondent expects too much in saying that "The whole effort of the spring will be directed to Tennessee." I fear a continuance of our old policy of distributing our forces.

The Federals, according to our scouts, have taken no troops from Middle Tennessee. I suppose, therefore, that as soon as Thomas is ready, he will save us the trouble of looking for him in Tennessee by marching into Georgia. Then, should we have been provided with the means of beating him and of marching, it would be agreeable to pursue him to the other side of the Cumberland Mountain and perhaps, not difficult.

I am sorry that you apologized for writing to me on so important a subject. I hope that you will continue to suggest to me. It would be as agreeable as advantageous to me.

We have observed your efforts with great interest and have great expectations from them. Could you not strengthen the army by pointing out to Georgians the worthlessness of new cavalry organizations, which are keeping them out of the infantry and which since Morgan's escape our people are running mad about.

JAMES A. NISBET TO HOWELL COBB

Sparta, Ga., Feb. 28, 1864.

Dear General:

Joe Brown has been here the guest of Linton Stephens and little Aleck likewise. The Legislature is to be convened in Special session, and Toombs, Stephens & Co., will no doubt put Joe Brown up to some factious issue with the Confederate Government. The point of attack will be the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. Yesterday, Bishop Pierce made a noble, patriotic speech in this place. Little Aleck

managed to have himself called out after the Bishop & made an insidious speech, full however of poison, & bile. I am sure, if not intimidated by a fore-stalling expression of public opinion, these men will seek to put Georgia in a hostile position to the Confederate Government at the approaching Session of the Legislature. Now it is a sad thing if Georgia is to be made to play such a role. Just as our skies are brightening and our Campaigns opening auspiciously mischief is being plotted. Your influence with the people is paramount and I notify you on time of what is going on that it may be exerted to prevent harm. I am sure it will be felt on the side of patriotism. Fortunately I do not think the Legislature can be swayed from its propriety.

A. B. LONGSTREET TO HOWELL COBB

Columbus, Ga., July 31st, 1864.

Dear General:

If Hood has not at least a month's provisions on hand, we are ruined, whether we conquer Sherman or not, unless the roads leading from Macon be kept open. How else is our army to be fed? Suppose the roads South and West of Macon now cut and we defeated; our army must perish. Where would they fall back to? Macon They would perish there. To Columbus? They would perish before reaching there. To Alabama via West Point would be the only retreat by which they could possibly subsist with the least hope of subsistence and that is a forlorn hope. In this event what becomes of Macon, Andersonville and all South West Georgia? -nay, all Georgia. Suppose we are victorious and take twenty thousand prisoners, what are we to do with them? How are we to feed them or even the guard of them? Suppose Sherman should surrender his whole army; How would we support it and our own two days? Where are the wounded to be sent, to avoid starvation? Suppose Sherman retreats, we cannot follow him. We cannot remain in Atlanta. Every soldier you send forth but increases the difficulties. Can you conceive of a more awful state of things?



And . . . .<sup>1</sup> they are almost certain. I see but one sure escape from them; and that is in keeping the road from Montgomery through this place open, stocking it with a thousand cars, and enlisting all the energies of Govs. Watts, Clark, Brown, and all other agencies, in hurrying on provisions to the army immediately. Let the road between here and Macon be strongly guarded through its whole length, and let all the provision cars be put upon it that can be mustered, and let all the provisions that can be got (without starving the prisoners) be put upon it and hurried to the army without a moments delay; or to points to meet on its retreat or both. Before this reaches you, you will hear that the Central R. R. is cut 30 miles below Macon, and the nearest bridges burnt. The Columbus road is postponed only because the Yankees knew that the breaks beyond Opelika cannot be repaired for weeks to come. May the Lord help us!

P. S. The Yanks may have saved Augusta by their damage to the Ga. R. R.

#### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE

Augusta, Ga., Jan. 19, 1865.

My dear Wife:

Pope and myself arrived here safely last night. I find the people depressed, disaffected and too many of them disloyal. . . . . Everybody expects Augusta to be attacked and I think it will be, without the slightest hope of a successful defence. It may be a week or more before it takes place, as Sherman, when last heard from was at Pocataligo, and his course from that point has not yet been indicated. I think it will be towards Branchville and Augusta. . . . . I find Gen. D. H. Hill in command here, and cannot understand why I was ordered here. Surely not to put me under him. I have written to Richmond on the subject and cannot tell you how long I may be here until I get an answer. Of one thing I am quite certain, one or the other will leave and I

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1. Corner of letter mouse-eaten.

have no objection to leaving myself. Whoever stays will have to abandon the place when Sherman comes and be well cursed for it. It would take an army to defend the place, and there are not troops enough here to make a respectable picket line around the City.

Tell Johnnie that I came across a pair of bellows to-day, which I bought at \$200 and will send up to Madison in the care of Mr. Charles Campbell with instructions to deliver them to whoever he sends with the wagons. . . . .

BRIG. GEN'L. A. W. REYNOLDS TO  
HOWELL COBB.

Athens, Geo., Jan 22, 1865.

General:

I have the honor to report that in compliance with your instructions I visited the region of N. E. Geo. on a tour of inspection. I went as far north as Dahlonga, where from the reports I had previously received, I expected to find an organized command under Col. Findley. In this, I regret to say, I was dissappointed. Col. Findley's command. if he had any, is scattered over the country as if quartered at home and it would be difficult to collect the men without considerable delay. I have directed Col. Findley, in case his command should be required for immediate service to concentrate all his men and at once obey the order issued from your Hd. Qrs., to rendezvous at some point in the vicinity of Atlanta.

Col. Findley claims to be a Brig. General, which rank however I can not acknowledge until officially informed thereof from your Hd. Qrs. Should he fail to act as directed, I would suggest his arrest.

I understand that Col. Rawlston has about five hundred men in Gilmer Co., Col. Ledger about the same number at Blairsville, Col. Simmons about four hundred in Hall Co., and Col. Baker a force in the upper counties near the Railroad. The last named officer appears to be doing good service and to be more efficient than the others.

Col. McCullum is at Canton and reports about one hundred men.

I regret to say, that a large number of men, comprising these organizations are within the conscript-age and absentees from other commands. I am satisfied that a majority of them have been induced to join these regiments under the promise, that they should not be disturbed and have the privilege of remaining at home.

These several commands are mostly unarmed. They should be made to assemble at some point where forage and provisions could be obtained. There, they should be organized, disciplined, armed and drilled and then suddenly sent to Gen. Hardee or Gen. Lee. By this means we might get a respectable force into the field. They ought not to be sent to Gen. Hood, because many of their old friends and neighbors serve in the ranks of Thomas' army and the facilities and inducements for desertion being greater, I have no doubt a majority of them would either leave or go over to the enemy.

I received a letter yesterday from Maj. Graham informing me that he was marching towards Ducktown with about four hundred men. He is acting in obedience to your orders. He will be joined beyond the mountains by Col. Baker. I think these two efficient and energetic young officers may effect something in the way of obtaining information: I only fear, that they may with their limited forces attempt too much.

I have directed the tax in kind to be gathered and stored, to be issued on proper requisitions to such troops as may be entitled to receive rations and forage. I have quite a supply at Gainesville in charge of Capt. Harrison, who permit me to say, is one of the most energetic and active officers I have met with in the service. There will be in a short time a considerable supply of stores at Dahlonga. Owing to the negligence of the officers charged with the collection of the tax in kind, I have found in the District a greater quantity of forage and provisions than I expected.

My limited authority has prevented me from doing many things, which I considered beneficial to the Government.

In conclusion, I am gratified to say, that throughout my tour in N. E. Geo., I have seen no signs of disloyalty, but or the contrary, I have found the people full of hospitality and kindness. I am satisfied, that if they could be protected from the roving bands of deserters and thieves which infest the country, they would prove true and faithful friends.

THOS. M. GRIFFIN<sup>1</sup> TO LAMAR COBB<sup>2</sup>

Head Qurs. Post,

Newman, Ga., Feby 17, 1865.

Major,

I desire to call your attention to the condition of this section of country. In the counties of Carroll, Fayette and Campbell, there is a very great scarcity of corn, barely enough to bread [?] the people with the greatest economy. I am informed by the very best authority that in the County of Fayette, there are more than twenty distilleries in constant operation, and in Carroll there are nearly as many more, besides several in Campbell, all engaged in distilling corn and rye.

It is almost impossible to buy corn at any price in consequence of these distilleries consuming every surplus bushel of grain. In the Counties mentioned there are many deserters who are in the habit of frequenting those sinks of vice, and in places banding themselves together for the purpose of resisting the men engaged in collecting the absentees from the army. The same state of things exists in nearly every county in north western Georgia. I trust Major you will take steps to have these evils stopped. The remedy in my judgment is a rigid enforcement of the laws, and if they are not stringent enough, to make them so by additional legislation.

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1. Colonel Commanding post at Newnan

2. Acting Adj. Gen. on staff of his father, Maj. Gen. Howell Cobb, headquarters at Macon.

The General Assembly is now in session and it should at once put a stop to the distillation of grain. I know that hundreds of poor families are almost in a state of starvation, and unless aid is given them they must starve. Many of them are widows and orphans whose husbands and fathers have fallen in the defense of their country.

I know these things to be true, as poor, dependent women are every day begging me for assistance. They are willing to work if employment could be found, but in the present condition of the country there is but little demand for their labor. The country above this in many places that have been overrun by the enemy, now is entirely destitute of supplies, and many have no means to buy with.

I deem it my duty to apprise you of the situation of affairs in order that we may have your aid to remedy the evils complained of.

M. H. WRIGHT TO HOWELL COBB.

Head Qrs., Govt. Works. Ord:

Columbus, Ga., March 23d, 1865.

General:

I have been furnished with instructions for and placed in charge of the duties of running in Supplies for the Ordnance, Nitre and Mining and Medical Bureaux, from Havana and Nassau, to the Florida coast.

You are too familiar with the wants, and general condition of our Armies, and the supplies at hand, to render any special notice necessary from me to impress upon your mind the great importance of success in the undertaking, and I do not hesitate to call on you for aid, and acquaint you of the enterprise.

We have already arranged to transfer our supplies at Burmuda and other points, chiefly to Havana, to make them available to us by quick and short voyages to the Florida coast. And our agents abroad are now ready to respond to our call as soon as we may be prepared to make

it. Transportation from the landings to places of safety is almost effected, save the Trains. We propose to prepare for moving (75) Seventy five Tons at once in a single train.

Now what I desire to ask of you, is to aid us in securing the Arsenal at Chattahoochee from the Governor of Florida, for a Depot, there being many facilities for storage, shipping, etc., etc. Will you please then do me the favor to write to His Excellency, Governor Milton, such a letter as you may deem proper, and send it to me, that I may send it down, (with other papers showing my authority, Instructions etc.) and urge upon him to let us have it.

#### HOWELL COBB TO GEN. J. H. WILSON

Athens Ga., June 4th, 1865.

General:

On reaching Nashville I was, by direction of the President, released from arrest and ordered to my home at this place and directed on my arrival here to report to you, remaining in Georgia subject to the further orders of the President. I accordingly report to you, with the assurance that I shall promptly respond to any order or summons that I may receive and in the meantime shall strictly conform to my parole.

For this act of personal kindness and confidence I am indebted in a great measure to yourself. I beg to express to you and to President Johnson my thanks and appreciation of this manifestation of personal confidence and to give you the assurance that neither the President nor yourself shall have cause to regret the confidence that has thus been manifested.

If agreeable to you I should like to have a personal interview, not in reference to any matter personal to myself, but on matters of public interest and with that view will visit Macon at any time that may be indicated as convenient to you.

This communication will be delivered to you by my Son, Capt. Cobb, who will arrange for any answer reaching me, that you may desire to make.

JOHN A. COBB TO HOWELL COBB

Macon, Ga., July 10th, 1865.

Dear Father:

I came up on yesterday from Sumter and leave tomorrow for Baldwin and return here on my way to Sumter in about a week. The five hundred bushels of corn I had sold the Yankees at one dollar per bushel, they declined taking and I had to sell it to the Gov't. Contractor at eighty cents, losing twenty cts. on the bushel. I will have about two thousand bushels more corn for sale. I am offered seventy-five cents in greenbacks or fifty cts. in gold. I think I can get a little more. I think I can get 55¢ to 60¢ in gold for it delivered at the depot at Americus. Don't you think it would be best to sell it for gold. Greenbacks are going down every day. Gold is now worth forty per cent premium and there is no telling how high it will go.

Write me at once which to sell for gold or greenbacks. I think myself it will be better to take the gold. Blooms owes me about three hundred and fifty dollars on the cotton. I had one bale I did not sell him. I sold it in Americus at twenty-two cents. I will not make any contract about the corn until [I] hear from you. If you write as soon as you receive this, the letter will reach me by the time I return from Baldwin. . .

NATHAN BARWICK<sup>1</sup> TO HOWELL COBB.

Sumter County, Ga.

Aug. 20th, 1865.

Dear Sir:

I have but very little to write. It still remains very dry. Cotton is sorry in consequence of the drouth Peas sugar

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1. An overseer on one of the Cobb plantations

cane and potatoes are sory We are all tolerable healthy I have not any cases of fever on the place I have some negroes lieing up pretending to be sick but I think its freedom sick and too lazy to work Samson has not done but little work since you was here and contracted with them he has a soar leg (and claims) that he is not able to do heavy work. I tried to make him shuck corn and make horse collars and he is not willing to do that He is very sasy and impudent If I was admitted to whip him I would know what to do with him There is a part of the negroes that works and behaves themselves very well and A part of them is doing mity badly

W. C. DANIELL<sup>1</sup> TO HOWELL COBB

Athens, Ga., Oct. 3rd, 1865.

My dear Sir:

Calling last evening at your residence I learned of your departure the morning of that day for Washington. I suppose you will have important business of your own to attend to with which I would not interfere. But should you have or find leisure and opportunity occur to speak to the President in my behalf, you will greatly oblige me. I have manifested my confidence in the President's sense of Justice by calling his attention to his discriminations against the subordinates whilst he has generously allowed the greater offenders to go at large. More recently he has magnanimously pardoned Gov. Brown whilst the little fish (myself for instance) are held in durance, that is I am under bonds not to leave this state. My remnant of property left to me is in South Carolina and I cannot be allowed to return into possession without a pardon. My mills and settlement and negro quarters were all burned and if I may have the use of my property another year, it is time to be replacing some necessary buildings. For that purpose I must if possible borrow money, which I cannot in good

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1. On the outbreak of the War a prosperous planter, whose summer home was in Cobb's Congressional District.



faith attempt until I am cer[tain] that I can use it. I have no further purpose or object in obtaining an early pardon than is connected with arrangements to provide for the dependent and helpless females of my family, who are homeless (my residence near Decatur having been burned) and helpless.

In all my life I never believed I was embarked in a better cause than the cause of the Confederate States. The fate of war has been against us. I submit to the decision with all the sincerity of an honest man, and am as sincerely a citizen again of the United States as Governor Brown and believe I am as justly entitled to pardon as he is, if he has not placed his merit upon the ground of Treachery to the cause he had sworn to support. I thank God I place my claim on no such ground. He has been enriched by the war, I have been impoverished by it. I ask my pardon on the simple ground that I intend to be faithful to the Government to which I sue for an early pardon that I may provide for those whom nature has made dependent on me. If the amount of loss sustained be any ground or atonement by which one may be said to have paid the Penalty, I have some claim on that score. But I place all my claim on the sincerity in which I renew my allegiance to the United States. I sent on my application for pardon on 14th June. Soon after I saw Gen. Thomas' Circular and conforming to that I made a new application from the Indian Springs about 15th August.

I suppose from what is said that there will sooner or later [be] a general amnesty for which I would cheerfully wait but for considerations already stated.

Should you find it convenient and acceptable to speak to the President on my behalf and succeed in obtaining my pardon please ask that it be forwarded to care of Phinizy and Clayton, Augusta.

I have been at your house this morning and learn that all are well.

HOWELL COBB TO MAJOR GENERAL  
J. B. STEEDMAN<sup>1</sup>

Athens Ga., Oct. 11, 1865.

General:

My application under President Johnson's Amnesty proclamation, has been forwarded to Washington during my absence. Desirous of having your endorsement and approval I address you this letter, with the request that you will forward to the President such recommendation on the subject as in your judgement is right and proper in the premises.

My case is briefly this. I was a secessionist, warm, earnest and decided, even violent and bitter. Entering the army at the commencement of the war, I served to its close and submitted only when our flag was struck down. I did all that an honorable man could do, to ensure success, nothing more. I thus state the case as strongly against myself as it can truthfully be made. I beg to say to you in the most emphatic manner that the imputation lately sought to be cast upon me, of unkindness to prisoners is both unjust and unfounded. I never spoke an unkind word, much less do an unkind act to a prisoner during the war, but on repeated occasions, I supplied their wants from my own means, such as clothing, feeding and furnishing them with money. If I have no other claim upon the President for his pardonable consideration of my application, I feel in my conscience that it would be due to me for my uniform kindness to prisoners, whenever the occasion occurred.

When Gen. Johnson surrendered, I looked upon the war as at an end, and since that time have counselled our people to a submission to the results of the war, and cheerful conformity to the new state of things. You however are fully aware of my course and conduct in this respect and I need not elaborate it.

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1. From a draft in Cobb's handwriting found among the Erwin papers.

Badly wrecked, as you may know, in fortune by the results of the war, it is important not only to me, but to my family, that I should be restored as soon as possible to my status and rights as a citizen and hence I desire naturally to obtain as early and as favorable action in my case, as is consistent with the public interest.

### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE

Macon, Ga., Oct 28th, 1865.

My dear Wife:

. . . . Judge Lockrane just from Washington, tells me that the President sent for him to consult about Georgia matters. He talked quite largely on the importance of the occasion and closed by saying that my name was the subject of a part of the conversation and that I might look confidently for a pardon.

The convention is getting on quite smoothly at Milledgeville. I understand that the race for Governor will be between that gentleman patriot and statesman, C. J. Jenkins<sup>1</sup>, and Joe Brown. There can be no doubt about the result. . .

### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE.

Macon, [Ga]. Nov. 5th, 1865.

My dear Wife:

. . . . Our office is now in full blast, that is, we are ready to do business when it comes.<sup>2</sup> It is true none has as yet made its appearance. We have had several nibbles (as the fisherman would say), and I think it will not be many days before we shall have a large trout. The indications are very favorable, and I have no doubt we shall do a good business. From what Johnnie tells me the negroes in Sumter are yet undetermined what they will do. I am more and more hopeless everyday about the poor creatures doing well.

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1. Governor of Georgia, 1865-1868.

2. General Cobb had formed a law partnership with Judge James Jackson and located in Macon.

Cotton is so high and the spirit of gain so rampant that people are wild in their notions about making cotton another year. It may work out better than I expect, I hope it will, but I am not willing to rely upon the work of freedmen for a support. If it comes, well and good. If not, let us be prepared to get our meat and bread some other way. So clients come along, we want your ready cash.

The convention is in an awful snarl over the war debt of the state.<sup>1</sup> A majority want to pay it, or a part of it but Marse Andy says, "Nary dime". What they will do, I can't say, though I rather think they will pass it bye and let the Legislature fight it out with the authorities in Washington. If this course is adopted, it is a virtual pledge that the debt will be paid. By a close vote, the convention has determined to sustain the College, and you may look for a resumption of the University next year. Everybody is for Judge Jenkins for governor. Joe Brown held out as long as he could, but the current was too strong for him and he went under. He has written a letter to Judge Jenkins pledging him his support. A feeble effort is being made to bring Stephens out against Jenkins. The Telegraph here has an article every morning for him, the work of one Judge Lockrane, but it won't do. Jenkins has the track and even Mr. Stephens can't jostle him.

. . . . .

J. I. S. TO HOWELL COBB.

August 24th, 1865.

Respected Sir:

Your son, Major Cobb, delivered me your kind message a few days since. It is said that "Necessity knows no law," and I am very much in that situation. I am as perfectly helpless as an infant, hundreds of miles from home, and friends, without a cent of money, and in wretched health, so it is with the greatest difficulty I keep out of my bed.

I dislike very much to impose on your kindness and gen-

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1. The Georgia State Convention of 1866, summoned to carry out the Presidential Reconstruction.

erosity, but I know your motives are the purest in the world, and are prompted by a noble and true Southern heart. You saw my helpless condition, and like the good Samaritan came to my relief. God will reward you for it.

I heard indirectly from home last week. The wretches are occupying my property in Norfolk and in North Carolina where I planted, they have burned every house on two plantations, stolen and destroyed all of my stock, farming implements, etc., and there is nothing left but the land. God only knows what they will do with that. I am entirely out of provisions; if you can spare me a little bacon, flour, sugar and lard, please do so, my family have had no wheat bread to eat for the past two months, only a few pounds will do me.

#### JOHN A. COBB TO HOWELL COBB

Americus, Ga., April 27, 1866.

Dear Father:

I received yours of the 23rd., inst. on my return from the plantation on yesterday evening, I sent the letter to Jesse Morgan to Mitch Morgan today, and requested him to send it to his brother at once as it was important that he should receive it as soon as possible. I did not know where he lived unless it is his brother that lives in Dooly.

Everything is getting on pretty well at the plantations. The negroes are doing very well except at the Jackson and Scrutchins places and there I think it is as much the fault of the overseers as the negroes. . Hudson and W. Barwick don't understand how to manage free negros, but the negroes on their places are doing better than I thought for, both of them make great complaints to me, but I think most of the trouble is in their imagination.

At Mounts, the negroes have pretty much their own way, but as they are a good set of negroes they do very well. He deserves no credit for it. He is now in Alabama, will be back next week. . . .

## JOS. E. JOHNSTON TO HOWELL COBB

New York, Oct. 8th, 1866.

My dear General,

.....We learned with great satisfaction that you have been successful in planting, and have made a good crop of cotton. I never, however, apprehended that you would not be prosperous, as you have a capital in your head which confiscation can't reach, and which serves you now in the law, as well as it formerly did in politics and war. Would to heaven that it had had fuller control in the Confederacy.

We have not been able to establish ourselves yet. I was so unlucky as to commit myself to a new express company just before being offered the rail road in course of construction from Columbia to Augusta, which would have enabled us to live in Georgia, which we desired greatly. I have left the express business, and am now employed by a rail road company whose road is to run from Dalton to Selma. The time I have passed in that country has gone off very pleasantly, for every able bodied man has served with me somewhere, in Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee or Mississippi, and is perfectly confident that I know him as well as he does me, and that I remember all the occasions on which he may have observed me. I can not tell you how much pleasure such meetings give me. It is by God's Mercy that anything connected with recollections of that disastrous war can excite pleasurable feelings.

I came here to endeavor to raise money for an Alabama railroad, but find it impossible now, from the uncertainty of our political condition, which makes all northern capitalists distrust southern property as security. Next spring matters will, in that respect, probably be in better condition. Mrs. J. came with me to meet her brother Robert and his family, just arrived from Paris. She has not enjoyed her visit, however, having been sick ever since her arrival. The last letter she received from Mrs. Cobb came just as we were betaking ourselves to flight from Columbia, and she replied from Charlotte, N. C. She joins me in cordial

regards to Mrs. Cobb and yourself, and all the younger members of the family.

REBEKAH B. SHUNK<sup>1</sup> TO MRS. HOWELL COBB

Wheatland, Pa., Nov. 6, 1866.

My dear Mrs. Cobb:

How long I have had it in my heart to write you, how many times I have even gone so far as to put your name at the head of a sheet of paper; I cannot now begin to say. But I do assure you that we have all thought and talked of you and dear Mr. Cobb many and many an hour since the sad parting in 1861, that we have wondered about your fortunes and hoped for your welfare, that I have promised Father and Mother a hundred times that I would write you. But my epistolary performances are less frequent than formerly as might be expected in the case of an elderly matron of grave cares. I have been sick much of the time and have also been much saddened by the ill health of Mr. Shunk.

York is our headquarters, but we have been away from there a great deal, spending several months at a time in Philadelphia, where for a while Mr. S. edited the "Age". This winter our house and Mother's have both been rented with the furniture—Mother going to Washington and we coming here to spend the winter (or most of it) with Mr. Buchanan, as Mr. S. is engaged on a literary work which he can prosecute better here than anywhere else, and Mr. Buchanan since Miss Lane has gone, is much pleased to have Company. He is now 76 years old, but hale, hearty, and erect as ever, has scarcely any signs of old age, hears and sees as sharply as he ever did, and enjoys fun and society as much as any person. He takes his long walk every day, receives a good many visitors, pays an occasional visit in Lancaster, goes on Sunday to the Presbyterian church, of which *he is a member*, reads the papers, and takes an in-

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1. Daughter of Jeremiah S. Black, Attorney General in Buchanan's Cabinet.

terest in all that goes on. He is as fond as ever of teasing, as I realize every day.

This house is a dear old comfortable place. Jane is devoted to the country and enjoys running about the grounds or accompanying her father and me on our daily walks. Mr. Shunk who was ill all summer, is improving very much, and so we *hope* to have a pleasant winter. Yet I don't make plans any more or ever feel secure, for tho' my life has been exempt from what are considered great troubles I have seen enough of disappointment and trial to subdue my spirit in some degree.

Father has the house in which Capt. Maffit lived, just opposite Franklin Row on K. Street. It has been rented altered and is very handsomely furnished. He has rented it for six months. My eldest brother, Chauncey is in partnership with Father: he, his wife and child live with them. My second brother is practicing law, or at least *renting an office*, in Uniontown, Pa. My eldest sister Mary is with Mother, and Nannie, the younger, is at a boarding school near Philadelphia. Father has been much absorbed in farming a place he *plays with* near York. It has been very beneficial to his health, but less so to his purse. He continues to buy property when it is high and sell when it is low, but his heart and hand are ever open—*none so good* as this dear father of mine.

Mother's health has been very bad, for a year she was a terrible sufferer and greatly changed in appearance, but she is better the past few months, much better. They have Mr. Clement C. Clay staying with them just now. I need not (I hope) tell you how we suffered with our Southern friends during the wicked war, how our hearts bled as we heard of their sorrows and privations, and how *none of us* ever said a word or did a deed which could in any way favor or help the vile cause of the abolition Yankee.

Mr. Shunk was mobbed very near the beginning of the war, we broke with many friends on account of politics. We felt political bonds to be the strongest on earth, for friendship and religion were trampled in the dust. *Our*



feeling and sympathies knew no change. We regretted and disapproved *secession*, but as a thing wrong in itself, but unwise and mistaken, but when once the ball began and we saw how it was carried on our hopes and wishes were all one way. We felt our position to be more unfortunate than any other, as we could act on neither one side or the other, and were condemned and misunderstood all around. However we had plenty of company. York is a splendid copper-head region. Indeed you people don't know the friends you have in the North and you do us great injustice. My great and only objection to my "Southern brethren" and I will add *sisters*, is that they are too hard on *all* Northern people, making no distinction, between a low mischievous Yankee and an honest decent person from Pennsylvania. They are too proud and intolerant, *generally*, but to this class I'm quite sure *you* and yours do not belong. I never for a moment supposed it, or my heart would not so often have traveled over land, rivers, and armies to your Southern home or have so *earnestly* prayed for your deliverance.

I am scribbling too much, forgetting myself—tho' Jane and Mr. S. have both been worrying me to quit ever since the first page. I hope I shall hear from you very soon and hear much that is pleasant of you. I want to know all about your children. Mrs. Ellis of Alabama has been visiting at this house. We were so much pleased with her.

With much love to Mr. Cobb, kindest remembrances from Mr. S. and Mr. Buchanan to both of you, I must now hastily sign myself, very sincerely.

#### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE

Macon, Ga. June 21, 1867

My dear Wife:

. . . . .A few minutes since and Johnnie called my attention to three carriages drawn up *in state* in front of the Lanier House. He says that the Mayor of Savannah is here in

charge of Genl. Pope<sup>1</sup> en route for Savannah, and that the city fathers of Macon are doing homage to the "*infallible*" by riding him and the Mayor of the city of Savannah around the city. How it sickens and saddens the heart to witness these scenes of humiliation. I thank God, that the good of my country does not require at my hands a participation in these propitiatory offerings to our taskmasters and oppressors. How long are we to endure these terrible trials?

I must mention to you briefly an interview which took place in Milledgeville last week between Genl. Sanford and Joe Brown, you must pardon the profanity. I tell it to you as it was told to me by *Genl. Sanford himself*. Brown came up behind him and placed his hands familiarly upon his shoulder and said "Genl., how are you"? The Genl. replied, "Gov. Brown, you have obtruded yourself upon my notice, and compelled me to address you in plain and emphatic language, I regard you, sir, as an apostate to every profession of your life, and one of those G—d d—d scoundrels that would sell his country, his liberty, and his family to advance his own selfish ambition". But says Brown, "Genl., you will come to hear me speak tomorrow". "Come to hear you speak?" replied the Genl. "No, sir, I have sufficient evidence of your being a damned scoundrel, without hearing the confession from your own lips". Says Brown, "Genl. you are an old man". "Young enough," replied the Genl., "to be responsible for everything I have said to you", and there the interview ended by Brown's walking off. . . . .

### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE

Macon, Ga., June 24, 1867.

My dear Wife:

. . . . It has occurred to me, looking to the unsettled condition of the country, and the prospect of this portion of

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1. Genl. John Pope, in command of the 3rd Military District, which included Georgia.

the American vineyard becoming uninhabitable to white people, that it would be a pleasant trip for you and I (taking Meyon<sup>1</sup> with us) to make a visit to Kentucky after Commencement, and hunt for a home. If we should have to go from Georgia I don't know where Southern people would find a better refuge than in Kentucky, where Southern sentiment still has control. I am not speaking of any immediate movement, but we could be looking out for the future. *Think of it.* . . . . .

#### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE.

Augusta, Ga., Oct. 14, 1867.

My dear Wife:

After spending a week in the salubrious climate of Dooly county I reached Americus safe and sound. As I was detained the whole week in Dooly, I did not get to the plantations, but Johnnie met me here after spending three days on the plantation. He makes a very favorable report about the crops. We shall make very nearly as much cotton as we did last year, but alas! the difference in our income. What is to become of our people at present prices of cotton? "It is awful to think of and terrible to contemplate", as old Judge Underwood would say. Some idea may be formed of the effect upon the morals of the people, when I tell you that men who pledged their crops to their commission merchants for advances of corn and meat, are now secretly selling their cotton to other people, to get rid of their liabilities to the merchants who made the advances. . .

#### HOWELL COBB TO HIS WIFE

Macon, Ga., Sept. 7, 1867.

My dear Wife:

Fifty two years ago, I set out on the unprofitable pilgrimage, which finds me today struggling with the adversities

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1. Miss Mary Anne Lamar Cobb, now Mrs. A. S. Erwin of Athens, Ga.

of life and more hopeless of the future than ever before. My good friend Judge Jackson has nearly consumed the morning in a learned lecture on the nothingness of all humanity, and the only lasting hope of the good man beyond the grave. And now I devote a few moments to you, whose enjoyment and happiness is the great object in life with me. To you I need not repeat the many true wise things, which the Judge has said, for you carry with you in your daily walk and life, the witness that testifies of the great and good spirit, that gives promise of another and better world. Be cheerful and happy, my dear wife, for you know not how much happiness is imparted to others, by your sweet smiles and cheerful face. For myself I can truly say, I desire only to live in the reflected happiness which I gather from your own happiness. It is to me the treasure of life; and may God in his infinite wisdom and goodness, long continue to your household this their greatest source of earthly enjoyment. . . . .

JOHN A. COBB TO HOWELL COBB

Plantation, Jany. 31st. 1868

My dear Father;

I received your letter a few days ago. I will not be able to go to Macon before you return from Milledgeville first of week after next.

I have written to Hardeman and Sparks and sent a statement of cotton shipped so that they can compare it with their books, and see how much is missing. I will bring the receipts up when I come. I will write beforehand what time I will be there.

We have moved to the plantation and are getting very comfortably fixed. I went to a sale above Americus the other day and left Lucy and Wilson here two nights—the “school marm” from Barwick’s staid with her.

We go up to town tomorrow to spend Sunday and I shall not return here before Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning, as the Liverpool Cotton Co’s. sale takes place on

Tuesday, and I want to be at it. I think we will need some more mules. If I get some hands that have promised to come and whom I am anxious to get, I will need six or eight more and if we could get the same kind we got from Johnson, I would like to have them, but about this I will write you next week, if we get the hands. We now have 162 and if the others come we will have 170, which is just as many as I want, it will make Hudson who now has 22, to 25, and Culver who now has 25, to 30.

I sent you by Railroad this week a box of bones<sup>1</sup> and a barrel of lard. You had better send to the depot for it. I wanted to have bought more mules at the sale the other day, but they went too high, indifferent mules in bad order sold for from \$120 to \$150, cash.

J. B. Ross and Son have written me several times about their bill, there is a balance of \$587.77 due them. I have written them that it would be paid just as soon as we got a return of the sale of our cotton. . . . .

I will send the last nine bales of our crop forward next week.

Our last year's crop is as follows:—

Bivins Place	———"Bridges"—————	181	bales
Domine Place	———"Barwick"—————	171	"
Spring Creek Place	———"Matt"—————	115	"
"	" " " "Morris"—————	78	"
Jackson Place	—————	116	"
Total on four places.—————		661	"
Our share of the Scrutchins place.—————		27	"
—————		688	"
To Barwick and Employees.—————		14	"
Entire crop on five places.—————		702	"

If I buy anything at the Liverpool sale, I will write you before I leave Americus.

1. i. e., fresh pork.

Tell Mother, we will be fixed up comfortably by the time I come to Macon and we would like for her to return with me and pay us a visit at our *country home*. I think the trip and change would do her good. Wilson runs pretty wild out here, and she will think more than ever that he needs training at her hands.

If you have not traded the gray mare off, suppose you send her back for me to use her in the plough. I am going to break some colts of Lamar's<sup>1</sup> and mine and plough them to help out, there are four that can be ploughed this summer, and not hurt them, they will be the same age the gray mare was when I commenced to plough her.

P. S. We have had such bad weather that there has been little or nothing done on the plantations yet. All hands will get regularly to work ploughing next week if the weather is good. We had a pretty heavy snow for this part of the world the other day. Wednesday, the thermometer in the house was 22 and outdoors 18, that is as cold as it was ever known here, it is pretty cold yet, but nothing like the above.

L. O. WASHINGTON<sup>2</sup> TO HOWELL COBB

Washington, D. C., June 21, 1868.

My Dear Sir:

I duly received your letter of June 5th., and the article it enclosed both of which I read with interest. I suppose you will readily accept as one excuse for delay in reply that I have been making a hard fight for your people who are in prison and the jaws of the military. I have been not merely writting in our papers but have also managed to induce nearly all the Radical correspondents here to be *neutral* or help us, and besides this I have done no light amount of work every day.

I think the Chase movement has done us a good deal of

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1. Maj. Lamar Cobb, son of Howell Cobb.

2. Editor of *The Intelligencer*.

harm. The N. Y. *World* has gone into it and come out for negro suffrage and accepting the state organizations in the South as finalities. Now, they drop Chase but stick to their heresies. The Chase men have money, are ready to use it; but I don't think they can do much. The movement has irritated many sound men, and led them to favor Pendleton as the best way to crush it.

I am afraid to enter the race without a military man to offset Grant. We may need to have one. There will be a good deal of Buncombe about Grant's war record and we must offset it, equal them on that point, and beat them on the other. Hence, I go for Hancock, or Blair, or McClellan. If a civilian be taken up perhaps Hendricks would be most available. Location good too.

Johnson's name will be presented and I do not see how our Southern delegates can refuse him a *complimentary* vote. He has been our friend and we must not appear ungrateful. His continued friendship up to the 4th. of March is very essential to us. Virginia and Georgia will both require his action to help us out of scrapes.

I think there are two great issues on which we can rally the Northern masses and *win* if our candidates and platform give reasonable assurance that they will be attended.

1. "A white man's government," the most popular rallying cry we can have.

2. *Reform* in the Executive Dept., Congress, and State Legislatures, retrenchment and reduced taxation. Extirpation of corruption, etc.

We must be able to promise these things. I don't think with a platform or candidate dubious about *negro suffrage* we can touch bottom. We will have a bolt if we dodge the issue, and it will lose us the election. But I think the Convention will manage wisely and I am willing to trust them. I hope to see you in New York.

## JAMES JACKSON TO MRS. HOWELL COBB

Macon, Feby. 22, 1869.

My dear Cousin:

Often since the death of Cousin Howell,<sup>1</sup> my heart has said to me, "write to Cousin Mary Ann", yet as often the reply of my judgement has been "You were with her in the first great outpouring of her grief, you met her at Union Point, what good can be done by writing". Yet now, feeling it to be my duty to write to you, my dear cousin, on another subject I must say a word about him who was the best friend and the noblest specimen of our fallen humanity I have ever known.

On one subject, and one only, he talked to me as he did not talk to you, and his silence upon it to you is but one other proof of his devotion to you. That subject was the doubt that long harassed him about the Divinity of our Savior. He often told me that he would not for worlds jostle your faith nor have his children for one moment doubt his entire faith in all the scriptures of God. He knew your devotion to him, your confidence in his judgement, your faith in his integrity, and he was fearful lest he might be the means of insinuating his own doubts into your mind. Besides, he told me he knew how miserable it would make you to think that he entertained those doubts, and to spare you this unhappiness, his lips were sealed upon the subject while in your presence. He has often told me that he would give anything for your faith and trust in Christ, as God in the flesh, and your confidence in our blessed Lord; and the illustration of that confidence which he saw so constantly and unobtrusively exhibited by you in the home circle told powerfully upon his strong intellect, and was greatly instrumental in working out the happy result of his conversion and preparation for death. My dear cousin, I write what I know, for he was, as it were, twin brother to me, and opened his whole heart to me. Another

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1. Cobb died suddenly, October 9, 1868, while on a visit to New York.



reason of his silence upon this subject in the home circle was his fear that some of his dear children might imbibe his opinions and be led into the labyrinth of uncertainty which so much perplexed and annoyed him. Another proof of that firmness of purpose and self denial, which so much distinguished him, especially when in bearing the burden alone, he felt that he was lifting it from the shoulders of those he loved most. . . . .